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an interface for receiving a message and a designation of at least some of the transmission modalities;

a memory for storing escalation rules specifying sequential transmission of the message by means of each of the designated modalities upon occurrence of a specified condition, prior to a recipient's receipt of the message, and

a routing facility, responsive to the escalation rules and to the occurrence of the conditions, for causing the message to be sequentially transmitted by the message server in accordance with the escalation rules directly to the recipient via the recipient's personal message receiving device. --

A2 4b  
b1  
---- 33(amended). A method of transmitting messages, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a message and a designation of at least some of a plurality of transmission modalities;

storing escalation rules specifying sequential transmission of the message by means of each of the designated modalities upon occurrence of a specified condition; prior to a recipient's receipt of the message, and

causing the message to be sequentially transmitted in accordance with the escalation rules directly to the recipient via the recipient's personal message receiving device. --

A3 5b  
b1  
--12(amended). The system of claim 1 further comprising:

an interface for receiving a message comprising a plurality of segments encoded in different formats, and a designation of at least some of the transmission modalities;

an analysis facility for (i) determining the segment formats, (ii) identifying, from among the designated transmission modalities, the modalities appropriate to the segments, and (iii) composing the segments into messages suitable for transmission by the identified modalities; and

wherein the routing facility for causing at least some of the composed messages to be transmitted by the identified modalities. --

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--43(amended). The method of claim 33, wherein the step of receiving includes receiving a message including a plurality of segments encoded in different formats, and further comprises the steps of:

- determining the segment formats;
- identifying, from among the designated transmission modalities, the modalities appropriate to the segments;
- composing the segments into messages suitable for transmission by the identified modalities; and
- causing at least some of the composed messages to be transmitted by the identified modalities. --

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-- 16(amended). A messaging system comprising:

- a message server comprising a plurality of modalities for transmitting messages;
- an interface for receiving a message and a designation of at least one of the transmission modalities;
- a memory for storing scheduling criteria governing use of the at least one designated modality; and
- a routing facility, responsive to the scheduling criteria, for causing transmission of the message by means of the at least one designated modality in accordance with the scheduling criteria wherein the scheduling criteria include at least one of (a) blackout periods during which the at least one designated modality may not be used and (b) time windows during which the at least one designated modality may be used, the routing facility causing transmission to occur at a time consistent with the scheduling criteria. --

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-- 47(amended). A method of messaging, the method comprising the steps of:

- receiving a message and a designation of at least one of a plurality of transmission modalities;

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storing scheduling criteria governing use of the at least one designated modality; and causing transmission of the message by means of the at least one designated modality in accordance with the scheduling criteria wherein the scheduling criteria include at least one of (a) blackout periods during which the at least one designated modality may not be used and (b) time windows during which the at least one designated modality may be used, transmission occurring at a time consistent with the scheduling criteria. --

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---23(amended). The message system of claim 16 wherein the interface also receives (i) a message inviting a response, (ii) a plurality of recipients, and (iii) for each recipient, a designation of at least one of the communication modalities; and wherein the routing facility, responsive to the designation, transmits the message by means of the designated modalities, wherein the communication modalities are configured to remotely receive the responses from the recipients; and the interface is configured to present a tabulated version of the responses.

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--53(amended). The method of claim 47 wherein the step of receiving includes (i) a message inviting a response, (ii) a plurality of recipients, and further comprising the steps of:  
causing the communication modalities to remotely receive the responses from the recipients; and  
presenting a tabulated version of the responses. --

Please delete without prejudice claims 17 and 48.